

Project Will Create At Least 10 Local Jobs with Federal Recovery Act Funds

Highland, NY - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today joined Town of Lloyd Supervisor Ray Costantino, members of the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association, and other local and community leaders to break ground on Phase II of the Hudson Valley Rail Trail project. The project is funded with \$3.158 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which Hinchey strongly supported and voted to pass. The contractor, Merritt Construction of Saugerties, will hire 10 to 12 construction workers over the course of the project.

"This rail trail extension is another step forward in the development of a national trail system that includes recreational, scenic, and historic trails that connect communities, restore open space for public use, and enable more people to discover the great outdoors." Hinchey said. "This project will create 10 to 12 jobs and is funded through the federal Recovery Act, which passed with my strong urging and support. It is yet another example of how federal investments are improving our infrastructure, spurring economic activity and providing a lasting benefit to our communities. With local budgets strained, the federal funding being provided also spares local taxpayers from having to fund this project through increased property taxes."

Plans call for a 1.3 mile eastward expansion of the trail from Commercial Avenue to the Walkway over the Hudson on Haviland Road. When Phase II is completed in mid-October 2010, walkers and cyclists will enjoy a paved, 12 foot wide, Class A trail that spans the entire distance from Tony Williams Park on Riverside Road to the City of Poughkeepsie.

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating, maintaining, promoting, and improving the Hudson Valley Rail Trail. Their long term plans call for a connection in Dutchess County to link with 30 additional miles of trail. When fully developed the Hudson Valley Rail Trail will feature uninterrupted pedestrian and low-impact sporting trails, stretching from the eastern end of the Mid-Hudson Bridge from Westchester through Highland, connecting with the vast trail system in the Shawangunks to the Catskills.

Hinchey voted to pass the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through which the project is funded. The recovery measure has already saved or created more than 2.2 million jobs – rebuilding our infrastructure and economy for global competitiveness. Through the Recovery Act, 95 percent of working Americans continue to see the benefit of one of the largest tax cuts in history in every paycheck. With Hinchey's support, the House passed the comprehensive Jobs for Main Street Act in December 2009 to make targeted investments in areas that will grow our economy over the long term – including highways, public transit, construction, small businesses, job training, and hiring and retaining teachers, police officers, and firefighters.